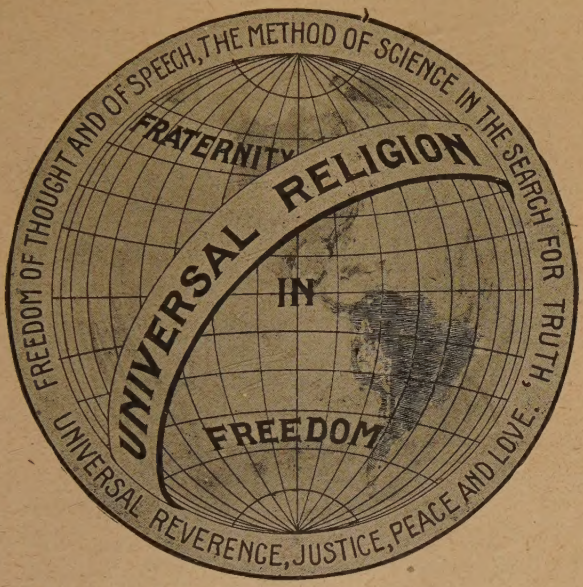
Universal Religion

[Successor to The Free Church Record.]

VOL. IX. TACOMA AND SEATTLE, MAY, 1901 No. 5.


FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND OF SPEECH, THE METHOD OF SCIENCE IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH,
FRATERNITY
UNIVERSAL RELIGION
IN
FREEDOM
UNIVERSAL REVERENCE, JUSTICE, PEACE AND LOVE.

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This monthly is published from October to June in the interests of the new religious fellowship whose boundaries are as broad as humanity and whose principles are as universal as the universe.

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SUBSCRIPTION, $1.00 PER YEAR; SINGLE COPIES, 15 CENTS.

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Entered at the post-office as second class matter.

DESTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION.

ALFRED W. MARTIN

The relation of destruction to construction is one about which considerable confusion of thought exists. Let us consider the relation and note also the causes that have made a re-formation of religious beliefs necessary. It is in four great discoveries of the modern world that we find the ultimate causes of the destruction of so many long-established, devoutly-cherished beliefs.

I. The first of these was the discovery that the universe is literally infinite and not a three-story structure as had been taught. This discovery was made by the astronomer Copernicus and published in 1543 in his "Constitution of the Universe," a work in which he shrewdly described his discovery as a theory having first sagaciously dedicated his book to the pope. Copernicus knew that his revelation ran counter to the prevailing religious ideas, but he thought that by adopting these literary tactics he would insure an immediate, wide and favorable reception for the truth that he had found. But in this he was to be sorely dissapointed, for on every hand the book provoked the most intense opposition. The Church had accepted the theory of the universe set forth in the Old Testament, an "infallible revelation;" consequently, for any one to discover and demonstrate a different theory was to commit both an error and a sin. And so, in spite of the evidence adduced by Copernicus in the support of the theory, in spite of the labors of Galileo, Kepler, Giordano Bruno and other eminent astronomers of the sixteenth century, the new conception of the universe was very slowly adopted. Milton, who published his immortal masterpiece in 1667, based it on the Biblical, Ptolemaic theory, making it a journey of but nine days for the rebel angels to fall from paradise to the bottom of the abyss. Read the hymn books and prayer books that are used today in Christian churches and you will find that their content is rooted in that conception of the universe which the discovery of Copernicus supplanted. We are told that Luther on his death-bed read Copernicus' book and pronounced it "atheistic and irreligious." Such indeed it was from the standpoint of the great protestant. His conception of God and of heaven grew out of and harmonized with the Ptolemaic theory of the universe and the discovery of Copernicus meant death

to that conception and the necessary creation of a new idea of God and heaven consistent with the discovered infinity of the universe. But of this more will be said in a subsequent discourse.

II. The second of the four great discoveries that made religious reconstruction inevitable occurred in 1784 when the British control in India was established. As a result of this commercial enterprise there was discovered the "Rig-Veda," a part of the sacred scriptures of the Hindus. This discovery led to a comparative study of oriental religions, and that, to a comparative study of the religions of the world, and this, in turn, to the creation of a new science, the science of comparative religions, including Biblical criticism. The religious significance of the discovery of the Rig-Veda is nothing less than the reconstruction of all traditional ideas of the Christian Bible in its relation to other Bibles and Christianity in its relation to the other great religions.

III. The third discovery was made in 1830 when Sir Charles Lyell led the way to new knowledge regarding the antiquity of the earth, the effect of which on religious belief was obvious. Men had been taught that the world is six thousand years old and was created in six days. Theologians had pointed to the first chapter of Genesis in support of their teaching, but geologists now pointed to Niagara falls and the long chasm cut by the receding water-fall and with the help of a little arithmetic they showed that it had taken three thundred thousand years to wear away two miles of that solid rock up to the present point of thunderous descent. The geologists pointed next to mountains that had been upheaved from the sea, to plains that were once a sea-bottom, to islands that at one time formed part of the mainland, changes involving hundreds of thousands of years for their execution and proving that the earth never was created and finished finally, but is continually being made and never finished. This discovery of the real antiquity of the earth and the character of its formation called for a new conception of Divine revelation. For the book of Nature with its leaves of stone contains a true revelation whatever of truth then may be in other books. And our final appeal on the question of the age of the earth must be to this word of God in Nature. No sooner had this conclusion been reached than Biblical commentators began to reinterpret the statements in Genesis to make them comform to the teachings of Geology. But what a very peculiar sort of "revelation" it is that does not reveal the truth until it has been discovered in some other way!

IV. The fourth discovery was published in 1859 in Darwin's "Origin of Species," namely, the ascent of man from lower life-forms by evolution, as opposed to the older theory of the descent of man from primordial perfection, illustrated in Dr. South's description of Adam as the embodiment of a perfection of whose greatness Aristotle and Shakspere were only melancholy ruins. The religious significance of this discovery of evolution (and of natural selection as its explanation)appeared in the inevitable reconstruction of beliefs about man's origin, nature and destiny. All the orthodox churches with their plans of salvation came into existence to redeem fallen man. But with the discovery that man has been on this earth at least one hundred thousand years and that he is the product of an evolutionary process extending through aeons, it is plain that all the traditional plans for "saving" men are unnecessary. Man, in other words, is not "lost" and therefore does not need to be saved. Man is ignorant, undeveloped, still carrying about with him traces of his animal ancestry and what he needs is to be educated, developed in brain, in heart, in conscience, to

"Move upward, working out the beast
And let the ape and tiger die"

Thus an entire reconstruction of the belief in salvation is called for as a result of the discovered trut regarding man's origin and development.

It appears then, that the immediate effect of these four great discoveries has been to destroy beliefs that for centuries had stood unassailed. Only the unreflecting and unthinking will deplore this destruction. They who understand the process of progress know that destruction as well as construction is inevitably involved in it. It has been said that "an ounce of construction is worth tons of destruction," but that remark never came from one who grasped the respective functions of the destroying and the conserving forces as factors in the attainment of progress. Assuredly it is greater to build than to tear down, to construct than to destroy, but there can be no construction without destruction, simply because something cannot be made out of nothing. The total amount of matter or force in the universe is constant and fixed. It can be neither increased nor diminished, so that every new product is but a recombination of elements old as the universe itself. Destruction, then, must precede construction. One cannot erect a building without destroying the trees that furnish the timber, the ledges that supply the stone, the ore whence the iron is derived for nails, hinges and other hardware. As with a house so with religion. Every new historic form

of religion has been created only at the expense of destroying forms that preceded it. The two forces of destruction and construction are inseparable. Go into yonder orchard and you will find its trees sound at the root, healthy at heart, vigorous and endowed with abundant power of production. But you will also find that many of them have accumulated too much bark, put forth too many shoots and stems, developed various excrescences, the total effect of which is seriously to impede and retard the growth of the trees. The judicious gardener will be summoned to remove the superfluous accretions and to cut off the useless growths. And all this he will do without in the least degree injuring the natural development of the trees. On the contrary his destructive work will afford them better conditions for bountiful production. Precisely so is it with the development of religion. The reformer finds it rooted in the soil of the human soul, sound at the roots, healthy at heart and posessing unlimited vitality and power to enrich human life. He finds too that in the course of its growth it has accumulated too much creed-bark, put forth too many shoots and stems of form, developed various dogmatic excrescences, all of which must be judiciously pruned away if religion is to be productive of the greatest possible good. In other words, the reformer here must be destructive before he can be constructive. He must dash the idol that he may reveal the God, discredit authorities that he may discover the truth, deny ancient revelations that he may create trust in present-day revelation, shatter forms that the spirit may be emancipated, shock men that they may be aroused from their torpor, stripped of their prejudices and prepared for reception of the larger truth. All such destuctive work is incidental to the ultimate work of construction; it is but the removing of that which clogs, encumbers, overlays. Many looking on and not understanding the process in its entirety, seeing the images broken, the pillars pulled down, the denials piled up, mistake the incidental for the ultimate, fancy that sheer iconoclasm is the sole end in view. But, as Nature never destroys without substituting something for that which she destroyed, so the true reformer is not a deformer. He refrains from pulling down any sheltering structure of belief, however crude, conscious that a poor one is better than none, until he can build a better one in its stead.

Occasionally there goes up the cry from certain souls who have not yet grasped the relation of destruction to construction "let us stop tearing down and begin to build." Yes, by all means construct, but do not imagine you can

escape the universal law which requires you to destroy in order to construct. Whosoever understands this law of the inseparableness of destruction and construction will have no disposition to deplore the destructive work of modern science, for the same science that destroys is also the science that builds.

The story is told of a superb ice palace built on the banks of the Neva in Russia to celebrate the natal anniversary of a popular czar. It was illuminated by costly candelabra, adorned with all the insignia of royalty and, made the scene of nightly festivals throughout the long northern winter months. But with the approach of spring and the returning sun the vast structure slowly melted down and the resplendent walls that enclosed the festive scenes slowly vanished till their place knew them no more. It seemed the very acme of sheer destructiveness that the sun should demolish this magnificent triumph of architectural genius and manual toil. Yet all the while the destroying rays were busily engaged in waking the earth from its protracted sleep, clothing the plains with grass, arraying the bare brown branches with leaf and bud and silently maturing the harvest that would feed the nations of the earth,—destroying the artificial product of human pride and constructing the infinite beauty of Nature's new year.

Just as men complained of the destructive sunshine and lamented the loss of their ice-palace, taking no heed of the sun's constructive work, so there are those who deplore the destructive sunbeams of science and grieve over the loss of their palatial icy theologies, taking no heed of the grand constructive work with which the sunlight of exact knowledge is enriching and gladdening the world. The ice-palace of dogmatic religion with its solid walls of authority and its gilded roof of revelation is an imposing edifice indeed, but the same science that is melting it down is constructing the grass and flowers and grain of free, spiritual and universal religion. Let the destroying sunshine of new knowledge melt away the frozen mass, it cannot destroy the established system without at the same time constructing a new order of truth and beauty in its stead.

What the elements of that new order are it will be the purpose of subsequent discourses to explain.

AN IDLE MOMENT.

BY HEDLEY A. HALL

Down in the western sky has sunk
The pink Hesperian light
And from among the fleecy clouds
Now Venus glimmers bright!

Her golden beams in softness gleam
Through fallow and through brake,
And shimmers through the restless leaves
Upon the dreaming lake.

O, brightest star of Vespertide
That yonder rising gleams,
Thou art the lovers' astral shrine
The Goddess of his dreams.

And this heart has a secret shrine,
An altar with love's light,
That glimmers as yon brightening orb
Set in the wing of night.

But not to glinting skies nor star—
(Tho' these breathe thoughts of Thee)—
My Altar-shrine burns thro' the night
Soul of Infinity.

Not stone nor star nor rushing flood
Nor hush of dreaming lake,
These manifest thy Present Self
But deeper thoughts awake.

A deeper thought has lit those fires
Within my yearning soul
A vision and a voice say "On,"
God is man's shining goal.

MODERN OCCULTISM.

Synopses of Discourses recently spoken at Tacoma and Seattle. Reports of the eight preceding discourses in the series appeared in the February, March and April numbers.

MRS. EDDY'S "SCIENCE AND HEALTH."

March 17th.

In a world where the best men and women are apt to lose their bearings and to cry out for something that will give them a more real sense of the Divine Presence and be a solace to their souls, it should be far from us to criticise wantonly, Christian Science or any other system that for such earnest souls has made the world brighter and life more worth living. Let our criticism have but one purpose, to promote the cause of truth. Nothing else on earth can justify criticism but that; and then it should be made in the spirit of love. The prime need in all discussion of the subject is justice and love, consistent discrimination, sound common sense and sympathy. That people are living who but for Christian Science might be dead does not excuse those who have denied medical aid to patients who but for Christian Science might now be alive.

The esential principles of Christian Science do not constitute a form of Christianity any more than they constitute a science. Hence the reply of Christianity to Mrs. Eddy, "this may be science and perphaps even philosophy, but it is not Christian." The reply of Science would be "this babblement of 'mortal mind' and 'non-existent matter,' in the face of the demonstrated conclusion that matter is indestructible, may be Christian, but it is not science."

The text-book of Christian Science is Mrs. Eddy's 'Science and Health.' Together they have given rise to a genuine form of book-worship and woman-worship. We

see to-day bibliolatry and Mariolatry in this movement, a worship of "Mother" Mary and of her alleged "divine revelation," "Science and Health." The effect of this worship has been to narrow the intellectual vision of her disciples, to generate that most offensive of all conceits, spiritual conceit, and to breed the kind of bigotry that expresses itself in Mrs. Eddy's remark, "There is no truth outside of Christian Science, all outside is error, all is vague and hypothetical." Nay more, this worship has deprived many disciples of that invaluable faculty we call common sense, exemplified in the case of Harold Frederic, who by the loss of common sense, invited death. He was a novice in Christian Science and common sense forbids a novice to refuse medical aid in critical illness. Common sense is something we cannot dispense with under any system, old or new, else fatal results are certain to ensue.

The essential teachings of "Science and Health" are not new. Their ancestry can be traced back to Plato and still further back to the "Hatha Yoga" of the Hindus.

On page 7 of "Science and Health" are the four fundamental reversible propositions on which Christian Science is based. The system roots itself in the belief that there are two agencies acting on man, Divine Mind and mortal mind. Divine Mind, we are told, is all in all, Man is a part of It and is controlled by It. How mortal mind came to be is not at all clear, but it somehow arose, and though having no real existence, yet it has a function to fulfil; it may be in harmony with or opposed to Divine Mind, the former resulting in health and happiness, the latter in sickness, disease, misery. Disease is a product of mortal mind, equally unreal and non-existent and the way to cure it is to establish belief in Divine Mind as the all, and disbelief in disease and mortal mind. Here it should be noted that it is not human but Divine Mind that does the healing. Christian Scientists repudiate the idea that man can heal. Only God heals. And this leads us to observe three extravagant and extreme theories of Christian Science: First, the theory of Divine Mind as the healer, implying a refusal to use drugs or employ a physician, whereas among the manifestations of the Divine in the universe must be included efficacious drugs and highly trained, skilled physicians, who know how and when to use them. Second, the theory of the effect of poisons, teaching that they owe their deadliness to "majority belief", not to any properties inherent in them, whereas common sense teaches that experiment and experience prove poisons to be what they are. No one ever dreamed that prussic acid was a deadly poison till a few drops poured on a dog's tongue resulted in almost instanta-

neous death. And since then, experience and accident have established prussic acid as a poison, and that is why we believe it to be so. A "majority belief" cannot make it otherwise any more than it could make air an anaesthetic or alcohol as harmless as water. Third, the theory that diagnosing disease tends to produce disease and therefore should be denounced and abolished, whereas diagnosis is the only certain method of determining exactly what ills people suffer from. Christian Scientists never diagnose a case as does the physician, consequently we can never be sure they have actually cured the diseases they claim to have cured.

Again, they keep no record of their cases, consequently they do not know the subsequent condition of the patient. They often cure only pain not disease. Take for instance, cases of cancer of the stomach. They relieve the pain and ease digestion for the patient, but the cancer is not cured; on the contrary it grows because it is its nature to grow. It may be fairly doubted if anything but an early operation has ever yet cured an indisputable case of cancer.

As for the cures actually effected by Christian Science, I have been long of the opinion that they are wrought in accordance with that well-recognized and long-established medical method known as "mental suggestion," this being simply reinforced by religious ideas and sentiments, making the suggestion much more potent and effective. Trained physicians know this, and often send patients to Christian Scientists because of the advantage derived from their religious reinforcement of the method of mental suggestion. But here we touch the meeting-ground of Christian Science and so-called 'Mental Science,' of which I shall speak next Sunday. It is needless to say that Mrs. Eddy stoutly denies that "mental suggestion" has any part in the cure of disease, nevertheless the proof that it has, as we shall see, is too plain to be gainsaid by any unprejudiced mind.

MENTAL SCIENCE
(March 24th)

In 1875 there was but one drugless road to health, Christian Science. But the overbearing imperiousness, autocracy and papal authority of Mrs. Eddy created a schism and soon a variety of independent healing movements sprang into existence, all alike in their rejection of drugs and every other medical aid except that which is mental. The names of Messrs. H. W. Dresser, C. Brodie Patterson, Henry Wood, W. J. Colville and Mesdames U. N. Gestefeld, Helen Wilmans, C. B. Newcomb and Miss S. C Clark are prominently representative of the "New Thought." Most of them are prolific writers and busy healers,

some, indeed, so busy that they have broken down and become physical wrecks, proving that they have been unable to demonstrate the truth of their theory in their own lives, that the power of thought has its limits as a healing agent and that, as Mr. Dresser says, "No healer can do without sleep and an occasional vacation without paying a severe penalty."

Like Christian Science, the "New Thought" has done a great deal of physical and moral good to thousands of souls. Failures there have been of course; yet undoubted cures have been wrought and spiritual character instilled into many an immoral and degraded soul. The spiritual truths and ideals of the New Thought are not at all new. They have been preached in this church ever since it was built and in all liberal churches. The only novelty of Mental Science consists in the belief that by absorbing these spiritual ideas and saturating one's mind with them they will act as healing agents, physically as well as morally.

The literature of mental science has many of the features of "Science and Health." I have read the principle works of the leading mental scientists and confess that in this literature I find considerable vagueness, mysticism and confusion of thought; appeal to reason and at the same time to intuition, to science and at the same time rejecting science whenever its results clash with the theory of mental healing, thus stultifying the writer's position; exaggeration and illogical reasoning; a liberal quantity of Emerson's transcendentalism without its quality, an admixture of commonplace truths with occasional passages of solid thought, practical and inspiring. Exaggerated claims are incident to every new enthusiasm. Time will reduce them to their normal and rational status; indeed, the return to common sense, reason and facts has already begun for several of the leading mental scientists.

The essential points of difference between "Christian Science" and the "New Thought" Movement may be conveniently summarized under the following heads:

One. Christian Science is an exclusive, highly organized religious corporation; the New Thought movement is an inclusive, unorganized, independent movement, having no "mother church." Its individual representatives independently seeking to leaven existing churches with the "New Thought."

Two. Authority in the former is centered in one person to whom absolute allegiance is due; in the latter, authority is centered in no person, but in intuition, the "supernal faculty," the "inner guide."

Three. Christian Science welcomes truth from only two sources,

the Bible and "Science and Health"; holding that "all outside Christian Science is error";the "New Thought" welcomes truth from any and every source, holding that truth, the word of God, cannot be bound or limited to any age, book or personality.

Four. Christian Science recognizes no other power than that of Divine Mind; the New Thought believes in the power one human mind to influence another in thought-transference.

Five. The former denies away sickness, suffering, disease; the latter acknowledges the existence of all three, holds that they are neither error nor illusion, yet susceptible to mental influence.

Six. The one declares "there is no matter, no body"; the other insists that matter and body are palpable facts and that on their own plane they are as genuine and good as any soul-facts.

Seven. In treating patients, the Christian Scientist denies as well as affirms; the Mental Scientist only affirms; no such thing as denial enters his mind, the affirmations he makes carry denial in them and that, he holds, is sufficient for efficacious healing.

Eight. Christian Science has recourse to "non-existent mortal mind" in explaining the facts of disease and death; the "New Thought" makes its appeal to human thought and to the recognized facts of human experience,

Having thus noted the main points of resemblance and difference in these two movements, certain critical conclusions regarding them may be briefly stated as follows:

First—Beneath the mass of exaggerations, extravagances and errors lies a genuine jewel of truth,viz.: the medicinal value of mental forces. This is the permanent truth-germ in both Christian and Mental Science.

Second—Physicians of the first rank are perfectly familiar with this mental factor, using it understandingly and successfully in the cure of a variety of diseases.

Third—The power of thought, or mind, over bodily conditions has obvious limits and among the most hopeful signs of the times is the recognition of this fact by such mental scientists as Barrows, Dresser, Winkley and Wood, whose latest works contain many passages in which the limits of thought-power are frankly recognized.

Fourth—In both Christian Science and the New Thought it is mental suggestion and religious ideas that constitute the healing agencies, evidenced by the way the healers go to work in treating patients.

Fifth—Physicians of the first rank are successfully using plain mental suggestion without any infusion of religious sentiments in cases of pa-

ralysis, fevers, skin diseases, hysteria, etc.

Skilled physicians know that the religious factor in healing has no other value than to make the patient more readily susceptible to the influence of mental suggestion. Hence, we find physicians occasionally sending neurotic patients to the mind-curist rather than spend time on them which they prefer to give to other cases of interest. I am fully persuaded that there is more hope for the world in one highly-trained. skilled physician who puts enthusiasm and moral consecration into his science and knows when to use a drug and when to apply mental suggestion, than in a hundred mental healers with no such training and no scientific knowledge of the bodily and mental symptoms of disease.

Finally be it remembered that whether we be Christian Scientists or mental scientists, osteopathists or believers in some other "path," there is one ideal which we all must develop; namely, the ideal of an inner spiritual armor, as scientific as it is spiritual, which will make us proof against the attacks of enemies that would destroy our physical well-being or our spiritual poise. How to develop that practical ideal will be the subject of the next discourse, entitled "The practical value of silence."

EDITORIAL.

THE UNSECTARIAN SECT.

Under this headline the BOSTON EVENING TRANSCRIPT recently published an article a portion of which we reprint believing it will be of considerable interest to our readers, most of whom in all probability, have not seen it.

"Every now and then some discontented body of believers raises the old, old cry of 'Down with sects,' and forthwith 'comes' out and founds an unsectarian—sect! The new institution is apparently the plainest contradiction in terms. To the unthinking mind it seems to invite ridicule, because it is so obviously pulling itself up by the roots. What of that? The old line sects ought to get just as much unmerited scorn from just such unthinking minds. For they, by their failure to be true to their own ideals, have compelled this exodus of truth-loving souls.

But, come, let us put aside trifling. Let us ask seriously what good may lurk in 'Independency.' A world of good it is, we are sure. A package of pamphlets relative to the First Free Church of Tacoma, Washington, which has lately come to us, impressing us as not only interesting but at the same time highly significant. One Sunday morning in October, 1892, Rev. Alfred W. Martin, pastor of the First Uni-

tarian Society, preached a notable sermon on the possibility of establishing a strictly free church; free of tradition, free of dogma, free of fear. The sermon produced a most amazing effect. The First Unitarian Society took immediate steps toward self-emancipation. It relinquished, not without affectionate reluctance, its connection with Unitarianism. As Mr. Martin says, the movement was 'a transition from sectarianism to unsectarianism, from Unitarianism to perfect freedom, from the dogmatic method to the method of science, from Christianity to universal religion.'

The Unitarians liked not the movement. They gave the Free Church its requested 'honorable dismission,' but declined to publish in the Unitarian Year Book a list of independent churches (in a separate category) and record within it the names of the First Free Church of Tacoma and its minister. This lack of Unitarian sympathy seemed to Mr. Martin a further evidence of the need for "independency." Double sure of his ground, Mr. Martin went forward, and from the charter membership of 65 his following has increased to about 250 (now 517). Meanwhile a tractarian movement has been steadily maintained. The monthly Bulletin has a peculiar interest here in Boston, for among the honorary trustees we find the names of Francis E. Abbot, Ph. D., and William Lloyd Garrison.

What now is the deep significance of "independency"? In the first place, an independent church is a society, not a sect. Each independent preacher has things his own way, is not conformed to a denominational model, is free. That is gain. In the next place, each independent preacher, by a natural selection, draws to himself such hearers as will hear him gladly. Having made his own constituency, he knows that he speaks to sympathetic, loyal, appreciative souls.

Moreover, the attitude of independent churches toward current thought is that of eager reciprocity. Never having formulated a creed, they are not afraid of progress. They welcome truth, come whence it may. But perhaps the most important feature of the independent movement is its living protest against denominational narrowness.

It is by no means easy to predict the future of 'independency.'

And yet there are signs of the times pointing unequivocally toward the independent church as the church of the future, such signs, for instance, as the defection of members from old organizations, the loud plea for Church union, the relaxation of credal tenet, the growth of tolerance and the liberalizing effect of the study of comparative religions. Of

course the historic churches are going to persist: traditionalism is too strong a factor in society to let them die. Agnosticism and irreligion are going to get their grip upon a very considerable class of Americans; perhaps they are going to keep that grip unrelaxed. But there is a class between; a class utterly dissatisfied with "formal Christianity," a class still desirous of religious uplift and inspiration; and to this class, already large and to all appearances rapidly growing, an independent church strongly appeals. And, as it seems to us, there need be no quarrel between denominationalism and "independency." There is room in America for both.

THE LIFE BOOKLETS.

Messrs. T. Y. Crowell and Co. of New York, have just issued a new sdition of Mr. Ralph Waldo Trine's three little volumes called "The Life Booklets." The separate titles are "Character Building Thought Power," Every Living Creature" and "The Greatest Thing ever Known." For the first time these three "Life Booklets" have been published in a set. They are bound in an exceedingly artistic and durable form, printed entirely from new plates and published in a very convenient form, small enough to be carried in the pocket. The price of the set is one dollar, and the separate volumes cost thirty-five cents each. We take pleasure in commending these booklets to our readers.